



**Fw: Final Libby OU1 & 2 ROD news release**  
**Carol Campbell to: Trujillo.Penney**

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please print

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Here is the final news release. It will go out at 3:00 pm MDT.



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## **For Immediate Release**

### **EPA, MDEQ Sign Records of Decision for Libby Asbestos Site *EPA selects remedies to clean up two key properties***

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(Denver, Colo. – May 11, 2010) Records of Decisions for Operable Units 1 & 2 (the former W.R. Grace Export and Screening plants) at the Libby Asbestos Superfund Site in Libby, Montana were signed Monday by Richard Opper, Director of the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, and Carol Campbell, Assistant Regional Administrator for Ecosystems Protection in EPA's Region 8. These Records of Decision (RODs) determine the remedies for the cleanup of two prominent properties within the Superfund site.

Public comments on the proposed remediation plan for the two Operable Units (OUs) were taken over an extended comment period of 120 days. EPA's proposed plans were significantly amended to address the concerns of the citizens in Lincoln County. In order to protect human health and the environment, a combination of soil removal and containment (capping) will be used to break the critical soil-to-air-exposure pathway.

"EPA believes that public health and the environment in Libby are best served by moving forward with these remedies in order to effectively break soil exposure pathways and prepare these important properties for reuse," remarked Campbell at the signing ceremony. "EPA will work closely with the City of Libby, the owner of OU 1, during the design so the remedy will complement any planned future use of the property."

In November 1999, EPA sent an Emergency Response Team to Libby as the result of local concern and news articles about asbestos-contaminated vermiculite that was mined near town by the W.R. Grace Corporation. EPA's first priority was to assess the risk to public health with respect to asbestos contamination and eliminate the major sources of asbestos in the community. The mine has been inactive since 1990 and access to the Grace property has been restricted for several years.

In 2002, the Libby Asbestos Site was added to the National Priorities List (Superfund) and more than 3,000 properties were inspected and sampled. By October of 2009, more than 1,100 properties had been cleaned up in the residential areas (OU 4) and significant toxicity studies had been initiated to complete the Baseline Risk Assessment. Investigations are ongoing in the neighboring town of Troy (OU 7), at the mine site (OU 3), at various former vermiculite processing areas (OUs 1, 2, and 5), OU 6 (the railroad rights of way) and OU 8 (state highways).

In June 2009, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson announced the agency has determined that a public health emergency exists at the Libby asbestos site in northwest Montana. This is the first time EPA has made a

determination under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) that conditions at a site constitute a public health emergency. This determination recognizes the serious impact to the public health from the contamination at Libby and underscores the need for further action and health care for area residents who have been or may be exposed to asbestos.

More information: [www.epa.gov/libby](http://www.epa.gov/libby)

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